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ABSTRACT

This information bulletin is one in a series devoted to adult education and learning in Slovenia. The bulletin is organized in four sections. The first section, SIAE [Slovenian Institute for Adult Education] Events, contains the following articles: "Proposals for Making the Year of Languages" (Sonja Klemencic); "Evaluation of the PLYA [Project Learning for Young Adults] Programme in the 1999-2000 School Year: PLYAers Return to School" (Andreja Dobrovoljc); "Farewell to LLW [Lifelong Learning Week] 2000--Pre-New Year Meeting: "We Start with the Belief that We Are Rich--Also in Knowledge!" (Slavica Borka Kucler). The second section, Slovenian Adult Education Scene includes "New Step Towards Establishing Adult Education" (Peter Beltram); "External Assessment of Knowledge of Foreign Languages" (Suzana Bitenc Peharc); and "VAT [Value Added Tax] Still Disputable" (Peter Beltram). The third section, "International Cooperation," contains "Learning Festivals Are Expanding" (Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik); "We Are United by Great Terminological Confusion" (Melanija Koncina); "Invitation to Learn Slovenian" (Olga Drofenik); and "European Exchange for New Partnership" (Melita Cimerman). The final section includes "Schools Already at European Level" (Interview/Dr. Lucija Cok); "Distance Education via www.mirk.si"; "Co-Chairing the Human Rights' Panel"; and "Training of Managers." (KC)

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spring 2001

3-9 SIAE EVENTS

10-14 SLOVENIAN ADULT EDUCATION SCENE

15-23 INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

24-30 SLOVENIA FROM NOVIČKE TO NOVIČKE

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PROGRAMME BASIS OF NOVIČKE

Novičke (The News) is an information bulletin with whitch we wish to inform individuals and organisations abroad with adult education and learning in Slovenia.

We plan to provide the following types of:

- description and presentation of events and activities in adult education;
- development, research and other programmes and projects;
- information on organisations, their needs, plans and activities;
- information on policy and strategies of adult education;
- the latest news in administration and legislation;
- statistical data;
- information on forthcoming events, workshops, seminars and conferences;
- presentations of new books and articles.

Novičke will provide brief, concise, objective and unbiased information.

Novičke will be published three times a year in English language.

Users will receive Novičke free of charge. This is a policy we intend to continue, provided we are able to cover the costs of publishing from the public funds allocated to adult education.

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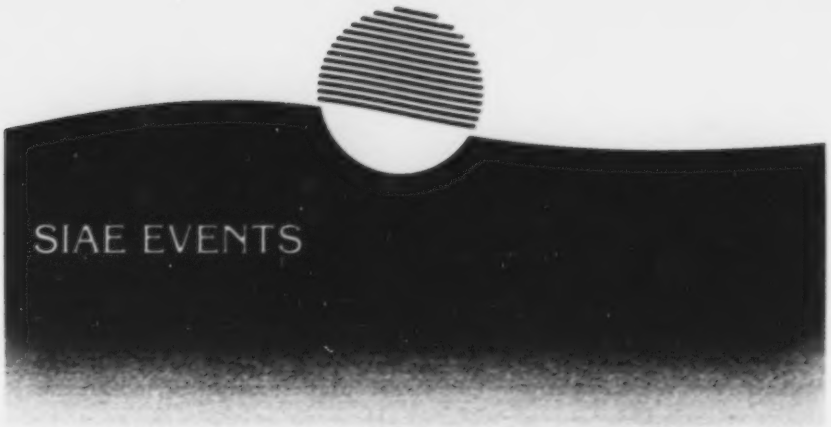


European year of languages and adult education

Proposals for marking the Year of languages

The Council of Europe and the European Union proclaimed 2001 the European Year of Languages. At the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, we will mark this year in a special way.

Language learning is one of the areas strongly represented in adult education practice. As in other areas, so in language learning: the knowledge we gain in school is insufficient - it needs to be refreshed and supplemented. Because of their work, adults often come across a need for knowledge of new languages; other common motivating factors include foreign travel and establishing various contacts etc. It is therefore no surprise that around 34,000* adults participate in various language education programmes each year, a substantial figure in Slovenian terms. Language education is interesting not just because of the extent of education; it is also the field in which the most diverse modern teaching methods are being introduced, various experiments conducted and new organisational approaches tested.

At the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, we believe that it is right to take advantage of the international year of languages to present achievements in adult language education, as well as to consider the weaknesses in the field and how to improve them. We have thus prepared some proposals through which we aim to contribute to marking the year of languages ourselves, and to encourage others to do so:

1. In the preparations for the celebration of this year's Lifelong Learning Week we will specifically encourage organisers to prepare events in which language education providers can present their achievements, promote new language teaching methods, encourage adults to learn languages, etc.

* According to the latest figures available from the Statistical Office of RS (1997), 12,647 people attended publicly certified language programmes, and a further 22,154 took part in non-certified programmes, making a total of 34,801 participants. Source: Statistical Information, no. 169/2000, Statistical Office of RS.

2. The Council of Europe and the European Union have specifically decided to mark **The Adult Language Learners' Week**. This will run from **5 to 11 May 2001**. Since our Lifelong Learning Week takes place in the autumn, and the organisation of special events twice a year would be an impossible burden on educational institutions, the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education called on the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport to organise a press conference during this week, bringing together representatives of the ministry, the SIAE, the National Examination Centre and the Centre for Slovenian as a Second Language to present:

- the renewal of the Slovenian for foreigners programme,
- the renewal of foreign language programmes for adults,
- the results of the use of the new programme for Slovenian,
- the results of the first external assessment of foreign language knowledge,
- the first response to the use of language portfolios in adult language education,
- changed method for statistical monitoring of language learning.

In the last two years, numerous changes and innovations have been introduced in Slovenia in adult language education, and these should be presented to the wider public.

3. Each issue of the Slovenian version of Novičke will contain a brief professional paper on a specific professional issue concerning adult language education. To this end we will invite various professionals to participate. The first such article was published in the March issue of Novičke; we deliberately chose to present learning of a language not commonly studied (Polish), since this year we should think about all languages spoken in Europe, and not just those most commonly used.

4. This year, each issue of the English edition of Novičke, which is published three times a year, will contain some Slovenian professional terms from the fields of education and adult education (e.g. izobraževanje, učenje, odrasel ...), and we will invite readers to learn them.

5. We propose that the editorial committee of the Andragoška Spoznanja (Findings in Adult Education) journal should invite various linguists and other professionals to participate by writing about adult language education.

6. We have placed links on the SIAE web site (www.acs.si) to international addresses where more information can be obtained relating to this European event.

Sonja Klemenčič, SIAE

Evaluation of the PLYA programme in the 1999/2000 school year

PLYAers return to school

Project learning for young adults was provided by five organisations in Slovenia in the 1999/2000 school year: TIN in Ljubljana, KOR-CIS in Slovenj Gradec, Skala in Celje, Murska Sobota Folk High School and Radovljica Folk High School.

The basic purpose of the evaluation of the PLYA programme was to determine whether the programme has been adapted to its target population - young unemployed adults who have left education. We were also interested in learning whether the effects on participants were positive, whether the recommended work methods produce the expected results and whether the programme motivates young people to continue their disrupted education.

The basic purpose of the evaluation of the PLYA programme is to determine whether its central goals, principles and results are being achieved in accordance with its concept, and whether the goals set at the level of the curriculum are being realised.

We conducted two types of evaluation in the 1999/2000 school year:

- we conducted ongoing evaluation at the monthly meetings of mentors and directors of provider organisations,
- we conducted a summation evaluation at the end of the programme; this contained:
- analysis of survey questionnaires from all programme participants,
- analysis of discussions with mentors and directors of provider organisations which began implementing the programme in the 1999/2000 school year,
- analysis of the documentation (personal sheets of participants, monthly reports, final reports and learning projects) of all provider organisations.

The summation evaluation at the end of the school year covered:

- 73 programme participants who completed the questionnaire for programme participants at the end of the school year,
- 9 mentors of the PLYA programme, with whom we held discussions at the end of the school year,
- 3 directors of provider organisations, with whom we held discussions at the end of the school year,
- 125 personal sheets of PLYA programme participants who attended the programme until the end of the school year,
- 40 monthly reports of PLYA programme provider organisations,

- 5 final reports of PLYA programme provider organisations,
- 26 forms for learning projects conducted by provider organisations in the 1999/2000 school year.

The evaluation was divided into three parts:

- subject findings: provider organisations, mentors, participants who attended the programme in the previous school year; we analysed participants by sex, their attendance in individual months and their education;
- analysis of project work, the quantity and form of individual learning, optional and production projects, and interest activities, provided in provider organisations in the past school year;
- realisation of the basic and joint goals; to what extent have participants achieved success in the areas of continuing their education, the formation of a vocational identity, general education and personal development.

Main conclusions

125 participants attended the programme until the end of the school year, while a total of 203 participants attended the programme over the whole year.

The gender structure was very interesting, with male students more likely to attend the programme: of 125 participants, 77 were male and 48 female, with males thus accounting for almost 62% of the total. In terms of previous education, 108 of the participants who attended the PLYA programme until the end of the year had completed primary school, while 17 had not. Those who had completed primary school mostly dropped out of secondary school, mainly in the first (36) and second (26) years, while fewer participants dropped out from later years (third year - 14; fourth year - 8; and fifth year - 1). Some participants had to complete either leaving examinations or a baccalaureate.

Participants mainly came from secondary vocational and professional schools, e.g. secondary trade, hospitality, dairy schools, electrical engineering and metal work schools, while those from later years came from general secondary schools.

Success of participants

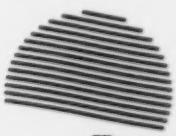
In the evaluation we focused on the PLYA goals and analysed the success of participants regarding goals achieved. The most important and fundamental goal of the programme is to prepare participants to continue their interrupted education. **25 participants had already**

met all the conditions for continuing their education, 16 opted for education, 23 sat examinations while attending the programme, 1 enrolled in an academy, 2 completed leaving examinations, 1 sat the baccalaureate, 1 completed his education, 1 resumed education, and two sought opportunities to continue their education. This makes a total of 72 participants which, given the numbers attending the programme, is an excellent result.

In addition to the basic goal, we also analysed the joint goals of the programme: general education, vocational identity and socio-cultural operation. Participants were successful in all three areas.

The results presented here are very good, but they also represent the success of mentor groups, who worked very hard with participants. One characteristic of participants is short-term motivation, whether this is motivation to participate in project work or motivation to continue interrupted education. Thus the great success of participants also reflects the intensive work of mentors in motivating participants. At the same time, the results of the evaluation confirm the need in Slovenia for the PLYA programme, and support our plans to expand it to all regions of Slovenia.

Andreja Dobrovoljc, SIAE



Farewell to LLW 2000 - pre-new year meeting

"We start with the belief that we are rich - also in knowledge!"

In order to bid farewell to the Lifelong Learning Week 2000, the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education invited LLW friends from all over Slovenia to come together to review the path taken, exchange experience gained and shed light on new opportunities for the future.

On 14 December, over 40 representatives of thirty-one providers of LLW events gathered together at the pre-new year meeting, some of whom have established a five-year tradition of partnership in the extensive, pan-Slovenian project intended to promote lifelong learning.

After the introductory address by Olga Drofenik, deputy director of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik, national project coordinator, gave a highly condensed report on the implementation of LLW 2000. She presented it as the

result of the combined efforts of all providers. Some providers have established themselves as excellent coordinators on a regional level or in a more restricted geographic area, connecting within their network a range of smaller providers of educational, informative, professional, advisory, social and cultural events. This year, particularly successful animators and organisers included RIC Novo Mesto (which attracted as many as 57 providers), Vitra from Cerknica (which is extending its operation to the border areas in Croatia), the Breznikar Creative Centre, certain municipalities (for instance, Dravograd, Škofja Loka, Jesenice) and folk high schools (Radovljica, Maribor, ...). Experience shows that in future we should pay particularly careful attention to acquiring and training coordinators.

Undoubtedly one of the areas in which providers have to acquire additional knowledge is the evaluation of events, since evaluation of the content, scope, method of implementation and accompanying events - with regards to the response and structure of participants - is essential for the further development of the LLW. Outstanding in this area this year was the Maribor Adult Education Institute - Folk High School, and so Alenka Sagadin presented their method for evaluating events, which could become an exemplary model for evaluation for all regional coordinators. The Maribor Adult Education Institute was the coordinator for thirty events, and in addition to the interesting programme it also prepared a special questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed not to require much time to complete while providing important information on the age, education and (un)employment of event participants, who also stated how many LLW events they had attended, whether this was the first year they had attended the LLW, how they found out about events, what they liked, what they felt was missing and what they would like to see in the future. This allowed planners of the Week to draw conclusions which will help them in planning future tasks.

Working not just with ideas, but with "thinking eyes"

Vesna Dular, director of the Novo Mesto Development and Education Centre (RIC), briefly presented her experience of coordinating LLW providers and events. Maja Korošak MA then spoke on the topic which drew the greatest number of participants to the meeting - cooperation between LLW providers and state bodies, and the possibility of bidding for tenders from ministries and other government services to obtain financial support for the educational and promotional project.

The question of how to obtain money to implement the LLW was also addressed by a "man of practice", Bojan Žnidaršič (Vitra Centre for Balanced Development Cerknica), who works on the territory of fifteen municipalities in "the land of wood products". He

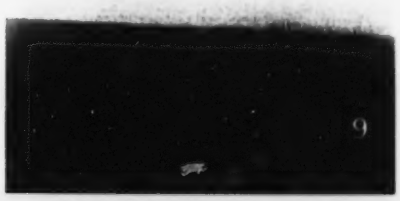
feels that successful work requires four elements: ideas, time, people and of course money. Ensuring the fourth element requires constant monitoring of publications in the Official Journal of RS with - as Žnidaršič puts it - "with thinking eyes"! In addition it is good to monitor needs in our environment, where possible to help formulate them and to participate in municipal projects. Money is also available internationally, although of course you need to know how to collect it. We will have to learn how to appropriately present our projects and obtain application forms and guarantees. Finance can also be obtained from international funds to expand border-area ties, particularly if both sides are involved. This will require study of the projects and "philosophy" of the European Union, otherwise we will not be able to submit suitable applications! We will have to focus on larger, strategic links between education and enterprise (both in terms of the content of events and the need for sponsorship). Even here much still needs to be learned, since it is difficult to achieve the desired response. We have to take time to ensure that our partner understands us. This will thus require individual animation (anything not addressed to the individual tends to get thrown away) and implementation of mutual benefit.

Thus the meeting formulated an initiative addressed to the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education and the Ministry of Education (represented at the meeting by Jože Miklavc MA, head of the adult education division) for the preparation of a programme and the provision of funding for training LLW coordinators and providers to enable them to monitor public tenders, thereby attracting funding, of which more is available than might at first appear. Experienced partners also raised a further interesting idea: "We have to start from the belief that we are rich - including in knowledge."

This was followed by a brief presentation of the starting points for the 2001 Lifelong Learning Week prepared by Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik, while Olga Drofenik summarised the most important experience gained from LLW 2000.

A special exhibition of promotional materials sent by providers together with their reports on the implementation of the Week was intended for those attending the meeting, while the festive mood was further encouraged by the appearance of the Zvok quartet who, in addition to songs suitable for the holiday period, also sang *Pod oknom* ("Beneath the window") to mark the 200th anniversary of the birth of poet France Prešeren. After the official end of the programme, delegates continued discussions in a relaxed atmosphere.

Slavica Borka Kucler, SIAE



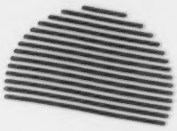
Economic development strategy 2

New step towards establishing adult education

The Office of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development is preparing the Economic Development Strategy for Slovenia up to 2008 (EDSS-2), a continuation of EDSS-1, prepared by the same institute six years ago. The document, which will be ratified by parliament and will thus represent a platform for the formulation of suitable policies on the national level, was produced on the basis of exhaustive studies by the most respected Slovenian experts on actual and possible guidelines, steps and projections for the development of all key elements on which economic development depends. The new EDSS differs from the previous version in two key characteristics: it is based on the assumption that Slovenia will be a full member of the EU from 2003, and considerably more attention is paid to the environment and social status of the population, in terms of the benefits and restrictions, opportunities and risks.

In our view, human resources are once again given suitable weight in EDSS-2 as the key factor of development. Much is also written about adult education (summaries draw on studies conducted by the SIAE) concerning the need to establish the concept of lifelong learning, the urgency of increased investment in adult education, both from public sources and by employers, and the need to design new instruments to motivate people, in particular the less educated, to enter education. The results of literacy research (OECD 2000) are also adequately presented, together with the many implications we can derive from them.

Peter Beltram, MA, SIAE



National Examination Centre

External assessment of knowledge of foreign languages

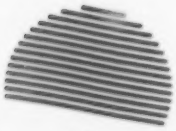
Adults have now been studying for over a year under the new publicly certified education programmes for English, German, Italian and French adopted by the Professional Council for Adult Education of RS. These programmes stipulate among other matters external assessment of knowledge, for which the National Examination Centre is responsible under Article 48 of the Adult Education Act.

For now, examinations are still conducted under the old system, but this year we are planning the transition to external assessment of knowledge and the issuing of new documents. Under the new system, the National Examination Centre will prepare and organise uniform tests of knowledge of foreign languages which will ensure uniform knowledge standards. Examinations can be taken by people attending foreign language courses or by self-taught individuals. After successfully completing the examination, candidates will receive a **publicly certified document**. Examinations are comparable with other international examinations, since they have been prepared in line with the recommendations of the Council of Europe.

Examinations can be taken at a basic or higher level, while the scope of examination material and the method of assessment of knowledge are determined by the examination catalogue. Tasks for external assessment of knowledge are prepared by a group of experts bringing together teachers of foreign languages from organisations providing adult foreign language programmes and experts from the universities. Candidates will sit for written examinations in individual languages in one diet of examinations on the same day at the same time in **authorised centres** which will conduct the examinations. Schedules for written examinations will be determined by the National Examination Centre and will be announced in the public media. Assessment will take place under uniform instructions, and authorised assessors will be trained in a uniform manner by the National Examination Centre. The oral part of the examination will be conducted before an examination committee, and assessors will mark candidates using uniform criteria.

We are planning a pilot examination, through which we will check examination procedures and inform candidates and organisations of the format of the examination, in April, while students on courses in the spring semester will likely be able to complete their education by taking the first uniform examination.

Suzana Bitenc Peharc, National Examination Centre



How to interpret the Law provisions

VAT still disputable

A representative of a private education company recently sent us a record from the tax office on an "inspection regarding the correctness of the time and manner for charging VAT at the taxpayer" at his company. The body responsible determined that those in charge at the company had committed a tax offence by failing to charge VAT on language courses. In so doing the body made reference to the Value Added Tax Act (the ZDDV), the Rules on the Implementation of the Value Added Tax Act (the Rules), and the Organisation and Financing of Education and Training Act (the ZOFVI).

In our opinion this is a case of incorrect interpretation of the relevant legal provisions, as it fails to take into consideration the Constitutional Court ruling of 13 April 2000 (odločba, Ur. l. RS, No. 42/2000, p. 5745), in which the judges, albeit in complicated legal language, nevertheless clearly stated that almost all forms of education are exempt from VAT. This ruling has been overlooked because it rejected as unfounded a proposal to examine the constitutionality of Article 52 of the Rules submitted by the Adult Education Society, the SIAE and the Faculty of Arts. According to the proposers the article should restrict the scope of educational programmes exempt from VAT (point 4 of Article 26 of the ZDDV: *services of preschool education, and education and training for children, young people and adults, including the trade of goods and services directly linked to such activities, if such activities are performed in accordance with regulations governing this area*), as it states that only those educational services aimed at the acquisition of public qualifications are exempt from VAT.

The ruling explains in detail why the disputed article of the Rules is not in accordance with the ZDDV. The constitutional judges refer to the Adult Education Act (the ZIO), which expands the public validity of qualifications to the entire scope of education in which programmes are VAT-exempt under this article of the ZDDV. To quote: "*It proceeds from the ZIO as the prescription governing the area of adult education that participants in adult education acquire particular knowledge, expertise and skills, and may also acquire public qualifications (Article 6) under special educational programmes for adults and parts of educational programmes for young people. Educational programmes are only cited by way of example in the second paragraph of Article 7 of the ZIO (...), which means that other individual types of adult education (also cited in Article 24 of the ZIO) are not excluded. The approach to education is thus based on continuity of education through all stages of life; this is subordinate to*

current life and work needs and to the individual's personal and professional development. In terms of assessment of constitutionality and legality the ZIO provisions that follow are significant, as they govern matters relating to educational programmes. The third paragraph of Article 7 of the ZIO stipulates that knowledge, expertise and skills acquired under the following programmes have public validity proved through public documents:

- *educational programmes for adults, and*
- *other educational programmes adopted under regulations that do not cover education and training for which the relevant expert council has determined an equivalent educational standard, or*
- *parts of educational programmes for young people under which public qualifications are obtained*

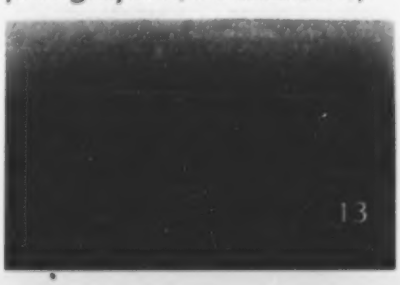
In accordance with Article 8 of the ZIO public qualifications are obtained:

- *under publicly valid educational programmes for adults*
- *through determination and confirmation of knowledge*
- *through examinations, and*
- *on the basis of the public documents specified in the third paragraph of Article 7 of the ZIO*

The total range of adult education services thus comprises:

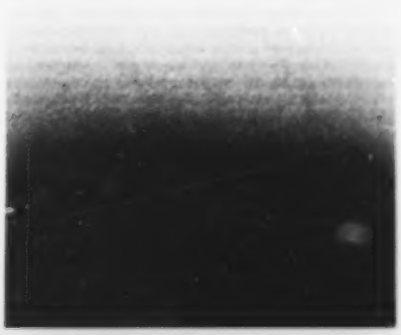
- *education inside and outside schools*
- *formal education, i.e. education that should lead to some type of formally confirmed educational results such as a specific level of educational qualification, degree or vocational qualification*
- *informal education, and*
- *organised independent study and self-education.*

Given the above, the scope of adult education programmes proceeding from the ZIO that are exempt from VAT pursuant to point 4 of Article 26 of the ZDDV is the same as the scope of adult education programmes that are exempt from VAT on the basis of the classification of educational programmes in the first paragraph of Article 52 of the rules." (ruling)



We are convinced that the section of the ruling quoted leaves no room for doubt: **provider organisations that do not charge VAT for their own educational programmes are acting in accordance with the law**. In the autumn we sent a request to the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport asking for the matter to be officially defined. We have not yet received any reply; perhaps it can be partly found in their contracts with education providers, which expressly state that VAT is included in the sums covered by the contract. We feel that those at the Ministry of Education and Sport, as the best qualified, should be the first to stop charging for educational programmes, as this would certainly apply the Constitutional Court ruling.

Peter Beltram, MA, SIAE



International workshop for the Second Learning Festival in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Learning Festivals are expanding

Learning festivals are forging ahead rapidly, both within individual countries and on an international scale. The recommendation in the Hamburg Declaration that every country in the world should organise at least a Learning Day if not a whole week, was realised under the wing of the International Adult Education Week in 2000 by around 40 countries; we can justifiably expect this number to continue increasing year on year. The reason for this lies in the first instance in the "infectious" enthusiasm of all those who have already organised such events and who have been richly rewarded for their efforts by the response of those for whom the festival is intended. We are the most eager promoters and so-called multipliers of the festival, which is probably one of the most convincing concepts for the promotion of education and learning.

Slovenia has a rich tradition in its festival, since last year we celebrated the fifth anniversary of the Lifelong Learning Week. All of the quantitative and qualitative factors with which we measure the success of the project were once again more than satisfactory, leading us to continue and increase our efforts. We are proud that through the Week we have almost alone promoted the strategy of lifelong learning, which from year to year increasingly proves to be the right approach. It allows us to identify the most diverse of providers, an increasing number of which are not engaged in education as their primary activity. The contents of events are extremely varied, the barriers between generations and between social roles of participants are demolished at LLW events, so that the Week is ever more becoming a method and reflection of links amongst all participants.

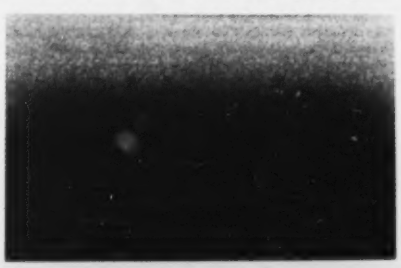
Last year's Lifelong Learning Week was exceptional on account of international participation marking the 4th Adult Education Colloquium, with the most numerous being guests from south-eastern Europe whom the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education hosted within the context of the EbiS international project (Erwachsenenbildung in Suedosteuropa - Adult education in south-eastern Europe). Representatives of Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania and Yugoslavia viewed a number of na-

tional and local events before learning in a two-day workshop about the Slovenian model of organisation of the LLW and formed outline action plans for similar events in their own countries. Participants in the meeting went home agreeing to attempt to organise learning festivals in 2000 in their own environments and, enthusiastic about our experience, they asked us for further help and cooperation.

The first to respond to this agreement was Bosnia and Herzegovina, which organised the International Workshop for the Second Learning Festival in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The first festival was organised on 8 September 2000 (on the international literacy day) in the Canton of Tuzla by the Tuzla-based humanitarian organisation "Amica-Educa" in cooperation with the Adolf Grimme Institute from Germany at the initiative of two German consultants, organisers of the German Lernfest. With the goal of promoting modern, alternative and creative methods of learning and teaching in the government and non-governmental sectors, and of raising the awareness of the public of the importance of lifelong learning, 44 provider organisations combined their efforts in organising a colourful palette of events, generating an enthusiastic response. It became clear that the Bosnian Festival of Learning should become a traditional event extending across the whole country, a conclusion further confirmed by the visit to the LLW 2000 in Slovenia.

Organisers began preparations for this year's festival of learning early - the first workshop was conceived as an opportunity to define the mission of the festival, and to identify partners, content and organisational methods. The workshop was organised by Emir Avdagić, president of the IIZ-DVV (Institute for International Cooperation at the German Union of Folk High Schools, Bonn) office in Sarajevo, while the professional aspects of the meeting were prepared and staged by representatives of the "Amica-Educa" organisation (Klelija Balta, Suada Selimović, Sejfudin Agić). The workshop was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Education of the Bosnian Federation, the Bosnian Cultural Centre, the Tuzla Education Institute and numerous societies and other non-governmental organisations, particularly those providing non-formal education for the local population, in many cases intended to overcome post-war and transitional conditions.

I was invited to the workshop, the only foreign representative, to present to participants the development of the Slovenian LLW and the experience of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education in managing this increasingly complex project. The leaders of the workshop in particular wanted my active participation and supervision of the results of the group work in three areas:

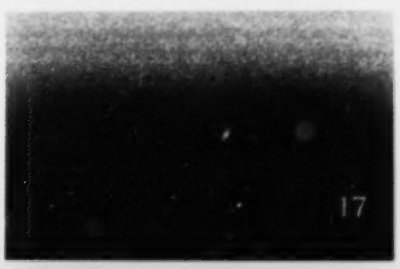


- **in defining the mission of the Learning Festival** we were united in our conviction that this event should be intended for raising awareness among the public of the importance and omnipresence of learning; the formation of a positive attitude towards all forms of formal and non-formal learning; informing the public of the varied opportunities for learning; providing information and advice; consideration of the state of theory and practice in education and learning; promotion of the role of learning - particularly media promotion; bringing together occasionally opposing camps: the formal and informal sectors, governmental and non-governmental organisations, all generations, different cultures, nationalities ...; celebrating outstanding creative and learning achievements.

  Such a broad mission of the Week of course allows numerous individuals, groups and organisations to identify with it and to recognise their own role in the Festival. The first part of the workshop provided strong motivation for those present: they recognised the opportunity to spread the idea in the towns and places where they operate and even to take on the role of local coordinator;

- **in defining the contents of the Learning Festival**: in all environments these are inextricably linked to the conditions applying in an individual country. There was thus discussion of the role of learning in overcoming the socio-economic conditions in the country, in exploiting resources (natural and human), in overcoming the most diverse forms of handicap, in creating opportunities for (self-)employment, in establishing healthy lifestyles, active citizenship ... - all of this through modern, creative, alternative and original approaches. The contents of the events of the Slovenian LLW and the methods used to present them sparked the imagination of participants, so that the result of the second round of group work was a highly original plan of potential events in various parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina;

- **in defining management aspects of LLW**: the experience of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, which has been taking on the role of promoter and overall coordinator of the LLW in Slovenia for six years, was particularly useful for those participants who will take on a similar role in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The themes covered by the third part of the workshop were: definition of the contents of preparatory, basic, parallel and closing activities; definition of the communication flows among all partners (along the whole vertical axis, from the Government (sponsor) to the visitors for whom the LLW/Festival is primarily intended); the schedule and joint promotional plan, and the method of self-assessment of the project.



The workshop was further enhanced by a talk given by Professor Nusret Tobudić from the Tuzla Institute of Education, who spoke about the characteristics of adult education in general and about the state of adult education theory and practice in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He summarised by stating that the Unesco recommendations on the future of adult education were only slowly being implemented in his country, since some of the providers, such as folk high schools, had collapsed, formal adult education mainly operates in evening classes, and far too little attention is paid to the numerous forms of informal education which are appearing. However, we have to expect that Bosnia and Herzegovina will recognise learning and education as the key to entry into developed Europe, and all potential actors in this field must be prepared to meet this challenge. Professor Tobudić sees in the Learning Festival an opportunity to overcome stereotypical attitudes towards the role of education and learning, although its designers will probably encounter considerable barriers due to these preconceptions.

The goals of the first meeting of the organising committee for the Second Learning Festival in Bosnia and Herzegovina were undoubtedly achieved. The experiences gained last year, together with Slovenian views and the ideas generated during group work, provide an excellent starting point for further work, which has already been given a quality foundation.

I personally am particularly enthusiastic about participation in the workshop for preparation of the Second Festival of Learning in Bosnia and Herzegovina. On the one hand I was able to present to my hosts the findings we have reached in Slovenia through persistent and dedicated work on the Lifelong Learning Week project, while on the other hand I encountered such a gratifying and creative response on the part of all participants, and such a fervent desire on their part to achieve something similar in Bosnia and Herzegovina, that our work became an exchange of experience, ideas and approaches among equals. This opportunity also again showed that this type of festival is intended for the presentation and promotion of learning, and that the very work involved in preparing, implementing and evaluating the project provides an interesting and inspiring lesson for all the participants.

Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik, MSc, SIAE

From the media literacy workshop

We are united by great terminological confusion

Slovenia is one of 8 countries participating in the transnational study of media literacy initiated by the Japanese National Institute for Educational Research and the Unesco Institute of Education in Hamburg. Participants in the research project broke new ground last year when we began gathering data necessary for the research; a full year later, the first conclusions are expected.

An international workshop entitled *Lifelong learning in the information age: Transnational study on media literacy in learning societies* was held in Tokyo between 9 and 11 November 2000. Representatives of nine so-called transitional countries attended the workshop. The initial eight countries (South Africa, Mexico, Brazil, Thailand, Japan, Hungary and Slovenia) were later joined by South Korea. The workshop was also actively followed by representatives of the organising countries, particularly from governmental and non-governmental organisations dealing with media literacy in their work. A total of 35 participants attended the workshop.

The workshop presented one of the closing phases of the research, and the organisers (NIER and UIE) prepared it primarily with the intention of obtaining from representatives of participating countries (i.e. the authors of case studies) the latest important information on the state of media literacy in their countries required for the preparation of a final qualitative analysis.

Participants were welcomed by NIER managing director Kanehisa Jamada and the project head at the UIE Toshio Ohsako, who stressed that media education in learning societies is an important part of lifelong learning for active citizenship. Thus the NIER and the UIE set themselves the task of contributing with the help of transnational studies to the development of new and improvement of existing programmes, contents and methods of media education for all levels of education while taking due account of the differing cultural backgrounds of participating countries.

This was followed by two interesting reports by Japanese experts. Yoshihiro Yamamoto of Ritsumeiken University discussed the state of and development guidelines for media literacy in Japan, and emphasised that parents, teachers and other educators, and not media representatives, play the central role in the development of media literacy. In the immediate future, Japan will therefore pay most attention to the development of better quality training programmes for teachers and other educators who will provide media education for citizens.

In the second report, we reviewed and updated the uniform indicators under which the case studies were produced or which authors applied in writing their products. Case studies were produced according to a pre-defined methodology prepared by NIER and UIE. It was conceived such that authors would first explain the education system and education participants in terms of their own country, covering school and non-school education; then describe the media environment together with media policy and such terms as: media, mass media, new media, media literacy; then provide statistical data on media access; and finally, the longest chapter was devoted to media education or education for media. We considered this in terms of all levels of education, from pre-school education to university education, formal and non-formal education. This was followed by the central part of the seminar, the presentation of case studies. Each country had 45 minutes, of which around 30 minutes was given over to the presentation itself, followed by commentary. Commentaries were prepared by NIER staff or experts from other Japanese government institutions dealing with media literacy. Each country had its own commentator, who prepared for this role by thorough study of the case study for their own particular country.

First day presentations were given by the hosts and by South Korea and Thailand, followed by the other countries on the second day. The final day was given over to a review of a brief comparative analysis of concepts of media literacy and media education among participating countries, and to the formulation of general guidelines and agreements on further phases of the NIER-UIE research project. A brief analysis of the basic definitions was provided by Professor Katsumi Okao from Osaka University, who showed that the countries included in the research, despite their varied social and cultural backgrounds, are in a very similar position. We are united by great terminological confusion. There are many countries (e.g. Thailand, South Korea, China, Mexico and Brazil) which have still not prepared definitions of Media Literacy and Media Education. There are also major differences among the countries, particularly in the varying concepts of media education organised for individual target groups.

It is still too early to discuss more detailed results, since the final, qualitative analysis of case studies has yet to be completed by NIER and UIE. Based on the final analysis, they will prepare recommendations for the development of media education programmes, propose further research into the use of information and communications technologies, and will produce proposals to promote education with the help of new media for each individual country. Research results, including the case studies of all participating countries, will be published in a combined publication.

Melanija Končina, SIAE

Promotion of the learning of languages of small European nations

Invitation to learn Slovenian

The Council of Europe and the European Union proclaimed this year the European Year of Languages. The celebration is aimed at all languages used in Europe, and should encourage people of all ages to learn foreign languages.

The most widely used language in the European Union is English, which is the mother tongue of 16 percent of EU residents; in 1997, 31 percent of adults could speak English. It is thus understandable that interest in learning foreign languages is less in English-speaking countries, particularly the United Kingdom. Eurobarometer research from 1997 on a representative sample of young people aged 15 to 24 showed that almost 50 percent of young Britons do not want to learn a foreign language, while more than 90 percent of young people in Finland, Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands and Luxembourg claim to speak at least one foreign language. Such a distribution shows the strong correlation between the size of a nation, the extent of use of an individual language and the readiness of residents to learn foreign languages.

We therefore propose to use this year to promote learning the languages of small European nations.

We came up with the idea when reading the 2001 wall calendar *A Selection of images celebrating the diversity of adult learning festivals from around the world*, published by the National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education, Leicester, UK, with the help of the Department of Education and Employment, the European Social Fund and the UK University for Industry. The calendar shows the posters which 11 countries used to promote and announce the "festivals of learning" 2000 as weeks or days of adult education or lifelong learning.

The slogan promoted by NIACE in this calendar is "*Learning is for Everyone*"; this is also the basic principle of the strategy of lifelong learning.

We invite all colleagues in the area of adult education to respond to our invitation by starting to learn Slovenian.

We begin with the following:

English	Slovenian
Learning is for everyone	Učenje je za vsakogar
Slovenia, a learning country	Slovenija, učeča se dežela
learning	učenje
lifelong learning	vseživljenjsko učenje
Lifelong Learning Week (LLW)	Teden vseživljenjskega učenja (TVU)
education	izobraževanje
adult education	izobraževanje odraslih; andragogika
Slovenian Institute for Adult Education	Andragoški center Slovenije

We invite you to visit the LLW 2001 in Slovenia, where you will be able to show what you have learned and will receive recognition for your learning achievements.

Olga Drofenik, SIAE

From the area of political education

European exchange for new partnership

From 6 to 9 December 2000, the Regional Union of Folk High Schools of Nordrhein-Westfalen organised in Bonn, Germany, a meeting of representatives of folk high schools and other adult education institutions. The meeting was intended for those adult educators working in the area of political education, and the basic goal was to establish ties and find partners for joint projects. 17 foreign educators attended the meeting with 10 representatives of German folk high schools.

At the start of the meeting, representatives of the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Union of Folk High Schools (IIZ/DVV) presented the conditions and opportunities for work and participation in various European education projects involving multiple partners from different countries. At the end of the introductory part, participants selected two themes, following extended discussion and consideration, of interest to all those present about which they wanted to talk and exchange

The next day saw very intensive work in two groups dealing with the topics chosen. The theme chosen by the largest number of participants was entitled "*Intercultural meetings and creating new contacts*. The second theme focused on European adult education programmes. As part of these full-day workshops, each participant presented his or her home institution and the conditions they face in their work in the area of political education. Both groups also had the task of producing common criteria for future cooperation and presenting their ideas for the first joint projects. Individual phases of work were presented to all meeting participants during the closing session.

The second day of the meeting was given over to learning about the activities and working conditions of individual German folk high schools. Folk high schools representatives briefly presented the work and specific features of various institutions. Participants in the meeting then chose which folk high schools to visit in line with their own interests. Work then continued at certain folk high schools, where participants met other educators and agreed to work together on individual projects.

A working meeting is planned for 2001 to allow these projects to proceed. There was a unanimous decision to define individual phases of agreed projects by email prior to the meeting.

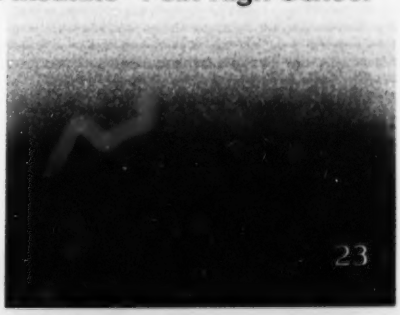
Participants felt that the following themes were most pressing in all countries:

- minorities/nationalism,
- primary education in Europe/joint starting points,
- intercultural meetings with themes concerning political education.

The organiser offered assistance in planning and organising meetings at which educators can reach agreement on the implementation of projects.

Despite the extensive programme, the organisers also prepared a very interesting and educational tour of Bonn, former capital of West Germany, which is recovering with great difficulty from the loss of its former important status. The final evening was brightened by the Dutch-German group Freylech, which prepared an exceptionally rich programme exploring through folk music the majority of European and Middle East countries.

Melita Cimerman, Maribor Adult Education **Institute - Folk High School**



SLOVENIA FROM NOVIČKE TO NOVIČKE

Interview with Dr Lucija Čok, Minister of Education, Science and Sport
Schools already at European Level

Some of the Ministry of Education's most important priorities are quality pre-school education, introduction of the last stages of the trial reform of primary school and transition to the reformed education system in 2003. Slovenia's education system is already comparable to that in the EU, says Dr Lucija Čok, Minister of Education, Science and Sport, who holds a doctorate in pedagogics. She is a co-ordinator of international Phare and Council of Europe projects, the author of a number of specialist articles, textbooks and reference books, and she is engaged in researching the regional policy and revitalisation of towns in Slovenian Istria. For the last five years she has been Director of the National Research Centre in Koper.

Science and education are now joined within one ministry. What are the main benefits of linking education and science?

Technology was transferred to the Ministry of the Economy. If technology is, through work programme planning, still closely connected to both ministries there will be a firm link between the universities, institutes and the economy. By joining education and science, this link could be very strong.

The budget for 2001 has been adopted. Are you satisfied with the budget allocation for education and science of some SIT 220 billion? Is that allocation relatively larger given that education and science have now been brought together?

The budget share is larger and is acceptable for the current period. Research and education are the Government's priorities. Some of the target research programmes have already been started. We also decided on network programmes in inter-branch research. Outside of the Ministry, it is also possible to obtain scholarship fees in Slovenia and abroad. The Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Economy have also prepared common research network. When we have counted up all of the budget items dedicated to science, this year they will be at a higher level than last year.

The coalition agreement says that in four years science funding should rise from the current 0.68 percent of GDP to 1 percent. Would such funding bring about higher scientific standards in Slovenia?

Slovenian civil society is still not sufficiently aware that science contributes substantially to development. When science proves that it is present in all aspects of development and that it has also contributed to higher added value, the civil society changes its attitude towards it. Currently, one can prove that society needs researchers.

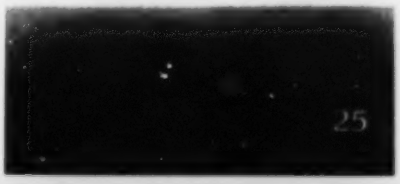
What are the Ministry's main priorities for 2001?

Some of the most important priorities are quality pre-school education, introduction of the last stages of the trial reform of primary school and transition to the reformed education system in 2003. We are planning significant changes in implementing the strategy of vocational education. There is a special stress on the restructuring of adult education, to which the budget pays greater attention. At the university level, we must transit to integrated financing of the universities so that they can manage their own funds themselves. We want to become even more comparable to Europe, therefore we have signed the Bologna and the Lisbon Declarations. In the area of science, we would like to ensure a realistic price per research hour and realistic programme financing, and simultaneously preserve and increase the share of funds for young researchers and create a firm connection in the network programmes of the economy.

One of the principles of school policy is to establish education comparable to that in the EU. In what areas is Slovenian education already comparable to Europe's?

Slovenia is on a good path, as its education is already comparable to that in the EU. Both previous ministers have carried out certain reforms, and some elements of European compulsory education have already been introduced, for instance early entrance to school, early introduction of foreign languages and optional subjects within the last three years.

In EU countries education is left to national strategies and not submitted to harmonisation, except in the case of providing education to minorities and children of immigrant families. The legislation in this area has been regulated. At the secondary school level, we have established a European system with vocational professional education and gymnasiums. At the university level, this process is being implemented through a credits system, programme assessment and optional subjects within programmes.



How many laws will have to be changed in order to become harmonised with the acquis in the area of science?

In the area of science, we temporarily closed chapter 17 on science and technology back in 1998, and later we presented the draft new law on research activity. As there was a hurry, the draft was sent before Parliament through its fast-track procedure. We expect it to be passed within the first half of the year. It will bring about some very important novelties as far as EU-comparability is concerned, for instance an independent agency to manage state funds. It will also be necessary to harmonise the Law on Technology Development.

A great challenge for the Ministry is teaching children how to use information technology. How do you intend to increase the computer literacy of school children and other citizens?

Computer literacy is an important project which, unfortunately, declined last year. Until then, schools had been supplied with 17,000 computers. This year, the share of funds is greater than in 2000. The programme says that by 2001 all primary schools would be equipped, while secondary schools would all be computerised by 2003. The target is not only to equip schools with computers but to train pupils and teachers in ICT. We will also offer the possibility to learn about information technology to the local community.

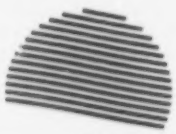
In 1999, 42 primary schools started to introduce the nine-year programme. What are this programme's advantages?

This year, somewhat more than a third of schools have introduced the nine-year programme. Despite some insecurity last autumn, motivation remains. The parents know the advantages of reforming education and of external assessment, which is mostly dedicated to the internal comparability of pupils, and comparability within the Slovenian system. Besides a soft transition from kindergarten and primary schools, the nine-year programme also offers several changes in the inter-disciplinary connections in the first two periods, foreign languages and the gradual introduction of subject teaching in the second period.

The Council of Europe and the European Union have organised the European Year of Languages for 2001. What will this year bring and how is Slovenia involved?

The European Year of Languages will offer opportunities to pupils, students and adults. It started in Portorož in January and at Lund in Sweden at the European level. The activities will take place through the whole year. Programmes will be prepared by both private and

public schools. Substantial funding has been allocated to the Year of Languages; festivals, meetings, competitions and camps will be organised. At the opening conference in Lund, I presented Slovenia's efforts to strengthen its role in regulating language policy.



The Information Society

Distance Education via www.mirk.si

Proof that developing the information society is not only the state's task but also the mission of different civil society organisations is the non-governmental organisation MIRK, the Centre of Project and Research Work on the Internet. With the aim of providing access to knowledge anytime and anywhere to anybody so desiring, MIRK has developed the project of distance teaching for primary and secondary school children. The project started in 1996 within the "Internet" programme of the Open Society Fund Slovenia. It has continued successfully since. MIRK was the first in Slovenia to carry out trial distance teaching and learning and has already by now taught many Slovenian children.

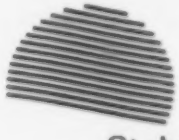
MIRK's tasks are to educate for lifelong studies by using information communications technology; developing and promoting project work and distance teaching; promoting the use of computer communications in primary and secondary schools; preparing didactic materials for applying on-line projects in the education process; and organising seminars, conferences and research work. The group, which is now called the Expert Council of the MIRK Centre, was the first in Slovenia to begin to disseminate knowledge about school project work on the Internet in the form of seminars in 1995. In its activities MIRK also co-operates with the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, the Slovenian National Institute for Education, ARNES, the Slovenian education network SIO, the European School Network EUN, and the Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci programmes.

MIRK is engaged in many international projects. It is the co-ordinator for Slovenia in TeleOlympics (www2.arnes.si/ ~ljosi8/to.html), a project which consists of sports activities and correspondence. MIRK also co-ordinates Slovenia's participation in I*EARN (www.iearn.org), which has connected schools from different countries since 1988. Another important project is KIDLINK (www.kidlink.org), whose purpose is to include schoolchildren and high-school students into a global dialogue through e-mail as the main means of communication. MIRK also co-ordinates Slovenia's participation in the ESP - E[illegible]

School Project (www.kc.kuleuven.ac.be/esp/), the organisation of teachers and learners established for the purpose of participating in projects implemented through the Internet and transferring information that helps learners and teachers alike to improve their learning and teaching processes.

Distance Teaching and Learning Project ***(www.mirk.si/snd/snd.html)***

The distance teaching project began in 1996 within the "Internet" programme of the Open Society Fund Slovenia, conducted by Alenka Makuc. September 1999 saw the signing of a one-year agreement with the Ministry of Education and Sport, where MIRK took on responsibility for all activities regarding such education and the preparation of web pages - in co-operation with the "Computer Literacy" programme. From autumn 1999 until August 2000, the MIRK institute, in co-operation with the Ministry of Education and Sport, the Slovenian National Institute for Education, the "Computer Literacy" programme and Ljubljana's Faculty of Electrical Engineering continued to train teachers and, as the first to do so in Slovenia, carried out trial distance teaching and learning for certain primary school pupils. MIRK has taught many Slovenian children who live around the world (mostly the children of diplomats) or who cannot go to regular classes for other reasons. The project is based on the web pages of individual school subjects where educational materials are available for the subject referred to, and through which a learner and his/her mentor (in this case one of the parents) gets instructions for learning. Target groups are distance learners who are guided via computer communications by a teacher; learners who access a database that provides extra explanations and self-assessment; and teachers who, with the help of the project, can consult other teachers and be in contact with their students even when either the learner or teacher is absent. In teaching schoolchildren, a variation of the ISID (i.e. ISDE - Integrated System of Distance Education) is used, as developed in the Laboratory for Telecommunications at Ljubljana's Faculty of Electrical Engineering and adapted to schoolchildren in terms of pedagogical, technical and visual aspects.



Stability Pact

Co-Chairing the Human Rights' Panel

During a meeting of the heads of working groups of the working table on democratisation and human rights within the SE Europe Stability Pact at Brdo pri Kranju, Slovenia officially took over the co-chairing of that working table from Romania for a six-month pe-

riod. Co-chairing the working table since 1 January 2001, Slovenia's priorities include an international centre for inter-ethnic relations and minorities in SE Europe, an institution to be set up in Ljubljana in the coming weeks.

Slovenia's priorities during its six-month stint as chair will be the encouragement of democratisation, the respect of human rights, an improvement in inter-ethnic relations, the protection of ethnic minorities in SE Europe, and closer co-operation of religious groups in the region. Slovenia will also act towards setting strategic goals of the working table more clearly, consolidating the contacts between all seven working groups of the working table as well as the significant integration of countries from SE Europe. This bold plan should be carried out by the end of June but will be feasible only if the necessary funds are secured, the co-chair, Foreign Ministry State Secretary Magdalena Tovornik told the press after the official handover from the chairman of the working table Panagliotis Roumeliotis from Romania.

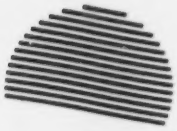
The money will come from the state budget, but since the budget has not yet been given the green light in Parliament it is as yet unknown what amount will be available. However, some SIT 50 million (EUR 234,700) is required. Part of the funds should also be raised at a Stability Pact donor's conference scheduled for September, Tovornik explained. Foreign financial aid has already been secured for an international centre for inter-ethnic relations and minorities in SE Europe, an institution to be set up soon in Ljubljana.

USD 5.13 Million for Projects in SE Europe

In his opening address to the meeting at Brdo pri Kranju on 12 February, Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel stressed that Slovenia has successfully resolved the problem of minorities' participation in public life and can therefore contribute to a multicultural and multiethnic society in the region with its experience. Slovenia has according to Rupel also proved its constructive role in the economic reconstruction and promotion of democratisation in the region.

The country participates in all three working tables of the Pact. It provided USD 5.13 million for projects in the region, within the Pact as well as at the bilateral level, last year alone. Slovenia is, in addition, the main foreign investor in Bosnia and an important economic partner for other countries in the region, too.

Slovenia manages the International Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victims' Assistance. Between 1992 and 1999 it provided over USD 100 million worth of humanitarian aid for 100,000 Bosnian refugees and in 1999 helped 3,000 Kosovo refugees, Rupel explained.



Public Administration

Training of Managers

On 24 January, the University College of Public Administration started to host the project of training managers in the public sector, formed as part of the EU Tempus programme. The project's co-ordinator Mirko Vintar said at a press conference that the training is in line with the EU accession strategy of Slovenia, and its main emphasis will be on the leading officials in the public sector. Through the project, these public officials are to be familiarised with the structure of the EU, the *acquis*, structural instruments and negotiating techniques, as well as given the managerial knowledge indispensable to good public administration.

Two-thirds of the project is covered financially by the EU, while the rest is being contributed by the Slovenian Government. Training includes 30 participants. It will take 20 working days, and a seven-day visit of EU institutions.

God's blessing on all nations
Who long and work for a bright day
When all of earth's habitations
No war, no strife shall hold its sway
Who long to see
That all men [illegible]
No more shall foes, but neighbours be

F. Prešeren: The Toast
Slovenian national anthem

AREA (sq km): 20,256 • POPULATION: 1,990,600 • POPULATION GROWTH (%): 0.1
• DENSITY (inhabs. / sq km): 98.3 • POPULATION OF LJUBLJANA (capital):

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